

NEW!

An Island Getaway Awaits at the National Aviary

In the cold of winter, a tropical oasis is appearing on the Northside of Pittsburgh at the National Aviary. For a limited time, visitors will be transported to the islands with new daily activities, included with admission, that bring bats and iconic birds like American Flamingos and Victoria Crowned Pigeons closer than ever! Stroll through hallways lined with breezy palm trees and vibrant florals, and roam warm, tropical habitats.

During daily Flamingo Island Adventures, watch a flock of American Flamingos stroll through the pools of the Wetlands. Give a bird an “in-flight meal” by holding up a fish for them to grab on the go. Learn about the island birds in this dynamic habitat from an expert.

Get close to Victoria Crowned Pigeons, native to the island of New Guinea. These inquisitive birds are the world’s largest pigeon species, and they love to explore! Their daily Royal Strolls have them stepping out in style as they walk through the hallway of Canary’s Call Presented by Dollar Bank. Watch as they stroll by, just steps away from visitors, with a member of the National Aviary’s animal care team who will share fascinating facts about this regal pigeon species.

Take a peek behind the wings of our bats during daily Malaysian Flying Fox training sessions, when a member of our caring staff will answer questions about these featherless friends from Malaysia. Get a glimpse of the bats’ nearly five-foot wingspan as they spread their leathery wings, revealing sweet faces and fuzzy bodies.

See aviary.org for start dates and details.

Don't miss your chance to land on an island oasis in Pittsburgh! ■

Tropical Rainforest Honored at AZA for Exhibit Design

A visit to the Big Easy resulted in a big win for the National Aviary! The recently renovated Tropical Rainforest received a prestigious award for Exhibit Design at the annual conference of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) in New Orleans.

The Tropical Rainforest, the oldest room in the National Aviary, was built in 1952. In 2018, an extensive \$1.2 million renovation — the first major renovation in the room’s

history — transformed the habitat into a lush, beautiful environment.

Over 19,000 square feet of bird-friendly glass protects birds inside and outside the habitat, and allows natural light in to grow cacao and coffee trees and a host of tropical plants. A towering 15-foot tiered waterfall and a leafy canopy rich with perches, nests, and vines create a lively habitat that encourages natural behaviors, like nesting, foraging, and courtship displays,

Continued, page 6



From the Director



The Experiences that Shape Us



The start of a new decade offers the opportunity for reflection, and a chance to look forward with anticipation to all that the next ten years might bring. With hindsight, we see that our experiences are what shape us.

As we welcome this new year, we invite our friends, supporters, and visitors to experience the National Aviary. New daily programs and activities enable visitors to see our flock in new ways, to get up close to iconic species like our American Flamingos and Victoria Crowned Pigeons, and to have experiences that will inspire, delight, and make cherished memories. Or, revel in the beauty of birds beyond the walls of the National Aviary on trips and tours guided by our experts.

Also new this year, we will begin construction on a brand new space, purposefully designed to be extremely versatile and accessible to the beautiful outdoor amenities around the National Aviary. Slated to be completed in the fall of 2020, the new space will serve hundreds of school groups for education visits, and will host elegant events like weddings, parties, corporate gatherings, and community events. A new entryway will offer interior connectivity between the event space and the National Aviary's habitats, and will also host a lobby, gift shop, and new restrooms.

Lastly, with each year, we deepen our engagement in efforts that save birds and protect their habitats around the globe. We are so proud to announce that our work to breed Guam Rails in human care has resulted in this species being recently elevated from "Extinct in the Wild" to "Critically Endangered" as a small population returns to the wild.

We are grateful for your consistent support, which allows us to provide care and conservation for birds at the National Aviary and beyond, to inspire respect for nature in the hundreds of thousands of people who visit us, and to create treasured experiences that stay with us, and shape us, year after year.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Tracy
Executive Director

NATIONAL AVIARY
PITTSBURGH, PA

The National Aviary inspires respect for nature through an appreciation of birds.

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Groups of 15 or more can register in advance to receive admission discounts and special packages. Call 412-258-9463 for group options.

BirdCalls is published for members and benefactors of the National Aviary. Subscriptions are free with membership.



A Wilderness Trek for Wildlife Lovers

by Dr. Pilar Fish, Director of Veterinary Medicine

A journey to scenic Alaska and the Yukon in August provided impressive views of wildlife for 31 travelers who joined the National Aviary and AAA Travel for an incredible adventure! The wildlife watching opportunities were remarkable. Right next to enormous glaciers, we saw puffins, kittiwakes, seals, sea otters, Bald Eagles, and even a Beluga Whale.

We arrived in Fairbanks just in time to see 3,000 Sandhill Cranes busily preparing for their long migration south. Crane families were teaching chicks to fly and forage. As far as you could see, cranes filled the fields, singing and performing elaborate dances together.

We traveled 2,500 miles in two weeks, visiting eight expansive national parks. On a remote, 7-hour wilderness tour into Denali National Park, we spotted grizzly bears, caribou, moose, and Golden Eagles. There aren't words sufficient enough to describe the grandeur of Alaska's wilderness and the joy of seeing these beautiful animals.

At the Alaska Sealife Center we learned about arctic marine birds, and had a behind-the-scenes encounter meeting puffins up close. The National Aviary also donated

New Event Space and Entryway Coming in 2020

Over the next several months, a 9,000 square-foot construction project will transform the National Aviary's west entrance, offering a dazzling space for events and education programs in a sustainable setting, with indoor connectivity to the National Aviary's habitats.

The new event space, The Garden Room, is purposefully designed and versatile, able to host weddings, corporate events, meetings, and the National Aviary's growing education programs. Expansive windows and doors made of glass with a bird-safe pattern will open up to an elegant terrace offering impressive views of the beautiful outdoor amenities, including the walled garden landscaped with gorgeous native plants.

The Charity Randall Foundation Eagle Hall will create a new entryway, allowing for seamless movement between The Garden Room and the National Aviary's habitats. It will also host a 1,000 square-foot lobby with a new gift shop and restrooms.

Lead funding has been generously provided by Richard King Mellon Foundation, with additional funding from The Charity Randall Foundation, Eden Hall Foundation, Allegheny County Economic Development Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund, Jack Buncher Foundation, Charles M. Morris Charitable Trust, and Robert and Mary Weisbrod Foundation. Sponsors include Atria's Hand Crafted Catering and Vitro Architectural Glass. Project partners include Perfido, Weiskopf, Wagstaff + Goettel and Jendoco Construction Corporation. ■

This Green Building/LEED Certified space will be ready for your next event in fall 2020! Contact MyEvent@aviary.org or call 412-258-9436 to book today.



A Fresh Look for Lories

Thanks to a generous gift from Bob and Kim Fanelli, the Rainbow Lorikeet Habitat has an updated look.

Nestled in Canary's Call Presented by Dollar Bank, the habitat is lively and loud, bursting with activity and song. In the newly redesigned habitat, brightly colored Rainbow Lorikeets hop from branch to branch, climb on vines, and, during their thrice-daily feedings, land gently on the outstretched arms of visitors holding cups of sweet nectar.

Rainbow Lorikeets, a small, active parrot species native to Australia, are at home in this freshly redesigned habitat. In addition to new flooring and paint, abundant perching and vines give the habitat a lush rainforest feeling. The lively, curious Rainbow Lorikeets perch, climb, socialize, and play in their freshly revamped habitat.

Get up close to Rainbow Lorikeets in their new habitat every day at the National Aviary! ■



FAR LEFT: A Puffin was one of many exciting wildlife spotted in Alaska. Dr. Fish (center) and National Aviary travel group deliver medical supplies to Alaska SeaLife Center's wildlife hospital.

medical supplies to Alaska SeaLife Center's wildlife hospital. The tour group delivered essential medicines, instruments, and bandages to treat injured and ill wildlife. It was a rewarding experience to be part of conservation in action and see the positive impact we can have protecting wildlife. ■

You, too, can journey with the National Aviary and AAA Travel when we embark on a trip to NYC in May! Call 412-258-9463 for more information.

Hundreds Help Paint Community Mural

The National Aviary's Learning Center is home to a new, eye-catching mural designed by Maria DeSimone Prascak of Maria's Ideas. The 30-foot artwork is comprised of a series of large canvases. In November, the lightly sketched canvases lined the Atrium, where hundreds of visitors added bursts of color, bringing them to life. The finished mural now hangs in the Learning Center, where it will be seen by tens of thousands of visitors every year. ■

Maria DeSimone Prascak poses with two of the six canvases that make up the mural.



National Aviary Winter/Spring Events

Jan 29 & Feb 5

National Aviary Bus Tour: Winter Raptor Excursion

8 am - 5 pm

Join National Aviary Ornithologist Bob Mulvihill on a wintery excursion to multiple birding hotspots in Western Pennsylvania. Scan the skies for up to ten different raptors, including the winter-only Rough-legged Hawk and Northern Shrike, and look for a Bald Eagle nest! Log your findings to participate in the Hawk Migration Association's annual raptor survey. All ages and experience levels are welcome.

\$90 members/\$100 nonmembers
Registration required; space is limited.
Contact Audrey Beichner at 412-258-9463 or Audrey.Beichner@aviary.org.

Feb 1, 8, 15 & 29

Job Shadowing Series: A Day in the Life of an Avian Expert

1 - 3 pm

Teens interested in careers in veterinary sciences and animal care can get hands-on experience from the National Aviary's experts during four days of job shadowing.
See full description on back page.

Registration required.
Contact Kate Campbell at 412-258-9439 or Education.Programs@aviary.org.

Feb 22 - 23

Flamingo Fest

11 am - 3 pm

Get up close to the National Aviary's flamingo flock and learn all about this fascinating species. Enjoy games, crafts, a flamingo yoga game, story time and other fun flamingo activities while learning how to help protect flamingos and other wetlands species.

Included with general admission.

March 21

Scout Day at the National Aviary

10 am - 2 pm

Girl Scouts from across Southwestern Pennsylvania are invited to a special Scout Day at the National Aviary. Enjoy close-up experiences with birds, prepare special treats for the National Aviary's flock, and learn about exciting careers in STEM!

Register at gswpa.org.

April 3 & 4

Creating Pysanky Eggs

Friday: 2 - 4 pm | Saturday: 1 - 3 pm

Learn the basics of pysanky, the traditional Ukrainian art of creating beautiful Easter eggs using colorful dyes and wax (batik). Registration includes all materials — the patterns, wax, and kitska pen used for drawing on the egg — required to make a beautiful decorated egg to take home and enjoy at the end of class.

\$20 members/\$25 nonmembers
Does not include general admission
Call 412-258-9445 to register.



Feb 28

21+ Event

Passport to Paradise

6 - 10 pm

Escape the winter weather and enjoy an island getaway at the National Aviary! Sip beer, wine, or a signature cocktail and enjoy tasty light bites available for purchase from Atria's. Get nose to beak with island birds while exploring our tropical indoor habitats, and support the National Aviary's important work in conservation, avian medicine, and education.

Visit www.aviary.org for tickets and information!

March 14

National Aviary Bus Tour: Waterfowl Migration

8 am - 5 pm

Join National Aviary Ornithologist Bob Mulvihill for the chance to see hundreds of waterfowl including ducks, grebes, loons, geese, and swans, and keep a look out for Bald Eagles and Sandhill Cranes. Planned stops include birding hotspots at Lake Arthur, Conneaut Marsh, and Pymatuning Reservoir.

\$85 members/\$95 nonmembers
Registration required; space is limited.
Contact Audrey Beichner at 412-258-9463 or Audrey.Beichner@aviary.org.

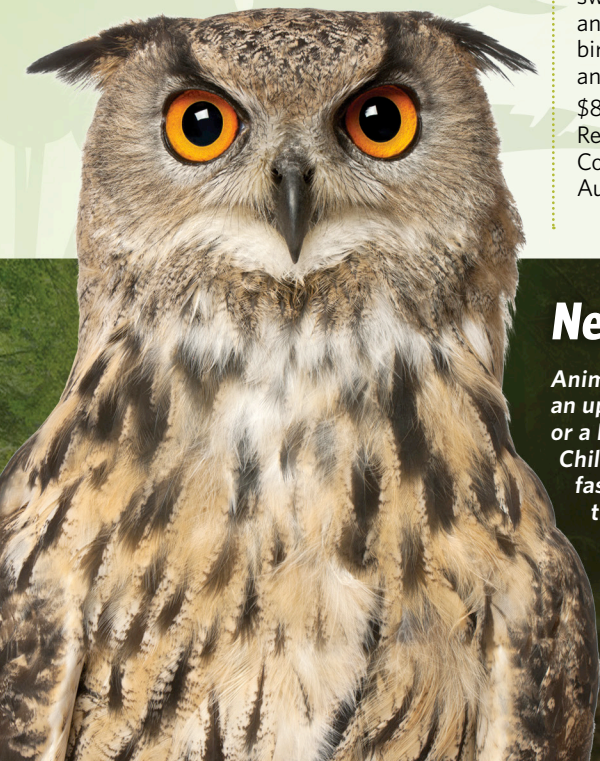
April 4 & 19

National Aviary Boat Tour: Birding on the Rivers of Steel Explorer

8 am - 5 pm

National Aviary Ornithologist Bob Mulvihill will team up with Ryan O'Rourke, Captain of the *Rivers of Steel Explorer*, to offer a very memorable birding experience. Search the shorelines for river birds like cormorants, herons, mergansers, and even eagles as the boat cruises the Three Rivers. Participants will enjoy a delicious catered brunch.

\$70 members/\$80 nonmembers
Registration required; space is limited.
Contact Audrey Beichner at 412-258-9463 or Audrey.Beichner@aviary.org.



New Encounters for All Ages!

Animal lovers of all ages can experience the thrill of an up-close visit with a Southern Three-banded Armadillo or a Eurasian Eagle-owl with new Junior Encounters! Children, accompanied by adults, can learn about these fascinating species with interactive games and a story, then meet them face to face! Touch the armadillo's natural armor, or get close to an owl on glove.

Advance booking is required.
Junior Armadillo Encounters offered daily at 10 am.
Junior Owl Encounters offered daily at 3 pm.
\$30 for one adult and one child.
Additional participants \$10 per person.



IMPORTANT CLOSURES: The National Aviary will be closed February 4, March 6, April 23, and May 21 and will open at noon on May 3.

April 4 - 5 & 10 - 11

Eggstravaganza!

11 am - 3 pm

Pittsburgh's most egg-cellent spring celebration returns! Hop over to the National Aviary for a parade with the Easter Bunny, a bird-themed egg hunt with an educational twist, a special story time with a live bird appearance, and more. Grab your camera for fun family photo opportunities! Included with general admission.

April 11

Members Morning with the Easter Bunny

9 - 10 am

National Aviary members are invited to visit the National Aviary for a special Members Morning with the Easter Bunny! Enjoy light bites, fun family-friendly crafts, and visits from birds before the National Aviary opens to the public. Afterward, explore the National Aviary's habitats for the perfect spring Saturday.

April 12

Easter Brunch featuring Atria's

Two Seatings: 10:30 am | 12:30 pm

Celebrate the holiday with a host of delectable brunch menu items from Atria's served buffet-style. Sip a brunch cocktail from the cash bar and enjoy visits from beautiful birds as you dine. After brunch, explore the National Aviary's immersive habitats, join in the Easter Bunny Parade, and hop over to the bird-themed egg hunt with an educational twist.

Member Adult: \$39, Member Child 4-10: \$19.50
Adult: \$44, Child 4-10: \$22
Children 3 and under: Free
Includes general admission
Call 412-258-9445 to register.
Space is limited; reservations required.
Tickets are transferable but not refundable.

April 18, 25 & May 2

Young Birders Birdwatching Hikes

8 - 10 am

Kids can learn birding techniques from National Aviary Ornithologist Bob Mulvihill! See full description on back page.

Registration required.
Contact Kate Campbell at 412-258-9439 or Education.Programs@aviary.org.

April 25

Earth Day Celebration

11 am - 3 pm

April marks the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day, the world's largest movement to protect the environment. Celebrate Earth Day with special activities and crafts, and meet birds up close. Learn about simple steps you can take to become a good steward for our planet. Included with general admission.

May 10

Mother's Day Brunch featuring Atria's

Two Seatings: 10:30 am | 12:30 pm

Give mom the gift of a relaxing morning among beautiful birds at the National Aviary. Savor delicious brunch items from Atria's served buffet-style, sip on specialty brunch cocktails from the cash bar, and enjoy visits from gorgeous birds. After brunch, explore the National Aviary's lush habitats where birds fly freely — the perfect Mother's Day experience for the whole family!

Member Adult: \$39, Member Child 4-10: \$19.50
Adult: \$44, Child 4-10: \$22
Children 3 and under: Free
Includes general admission
Call 412-258-9445 to register.
Space is limited; reservations required.
Tickets are transferable but not refundable.



May 15 - 18

National Aviary Bus Tour: Birds in the Big Apple


Did you know that Central Park is one of the world's birding hotspots? Visit New York City with National Aviary Ornithologist Bob Mulvihill and AAA Travel and see birds in a new way: on private tours of Central Park Zoo and the avian collections of the American Museum of Natural History, and even from the Empire State Building! Bird enthusiasts of all experience levels are welcome to adventure to the Big Apple and experience the wonders of spring migration.


Multiple packages including travel, hotel, and most meals are available.
Contact Audrey Beichner at 412-258-9463 or Audrey.Beichner@aviary.org.

Daily Schedule

11:00 am Victoria Crowned Pigeon
Royal Stroll


Canary's Call Presented by 

11:00 am Daily, except Tuesday
Immersive Bird Show 

presented by 

Helen M. Schmidt FliteZone™ Theater

11:30 am Flamingo Island Adventure
Wetlands

11:30 am Rainbow Lorikeet Feeding 

Canary's Call Presented by 

12:30 pm Hornbill or Toucan Feeding 

Helen M. Schmidt FliteZone™ Theater

1:00 pm Penguins on Islands

Penguin Point

1:30 pm Daily, except Tuesday
Immersive Bird Show 

presented by 

Helen M. Schmidt FliteZone™ Theater

2:00 pm Flamingo Island Adventure
Wetlands

2:30 pm Rainbow Lorikeet Feeding 


Canary's Call Presented by 

3:00 pm Hang with the Bats

Canary's Call Presented by 

3:30 pm Victoria Crowned Pigeon
Royal Stroll


Canary's Call Presented by 

3:30 pm Hornbill or Toucan Feeding 


Helen Schmidt FliteZone™ Theater

4:00 pm Penguins on Islands

Penguin Point

4:00 pm Rainbow Lorikeet Feeding 

Canary's Call Presented by 

 = \$3 or 2 for \$5



Event committee:
Thea Martin,
Desmone Architects;
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Professional Graphic
Communications; Event
Chair Jennifer Bertetto,
Trib Total Media;
Christine Dombroski,
Trib Total Media;
and Megan Haines,
McGuireWoods.

Hundreds Flock to Ladies Night Out

Presented by
TRIB TOTAL MEDIA

More than 350 women came to the National Aviary in September for the first ever Ladies Night Out presented by Trib Total Media. Partygoers enjoyed bites from Atria's Hand Crafted Catering, signature cocktails, and a decadent Pittsburgh cookie table as they sampled offerings from event partners in the spa, salon, cosmetic, clothing, jewelry, and travel industries, and supported the National Aviary's conservation, education, and animal care initiatives!

Event Chair Jennifer Bertetto, center, and Executive Director Cheryl Tracy, right, are greeted by Curator of Behavioral Management and Animal Programs Cathy Schlott and Mac, a Military Macaw.



In Loving Memory of Aleutia

It is with great sorrow that we announce the passing of Aleutia, the Steller's Sea-eagle. Aleutia began exhibiting signs of illness early on the morning of October 2. Despite receiving expert, compassionate care from the National Aviary's veterinary staff, she did not survive.

This majestic bird had a playful personality. She loved splashing in her pool in the warm summer months and receiving the attention — and love — of staff and visitors. Aleutia lived to be 17 years old. She will be deeply missed.

Gifts made in memory of Aleutia will support the National Aviary's Avian Conservation Fund and critical care for birds. To make a contribution visit aviary.org/make-a-donation

DONOR SOCIETY Thank you to the following individual supporters who made donations of \$500+ since January. Your generosity helps fund the care of our animals. To be a part of our Donor Society, contact Ted.Bartlett@aviary.org or 412-258-9433. Learn more at aviary.org/donor-society.

MARTIAL EAGLE \$2,500+

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Tropical Rainforest Honored

continued from page 1

all viewable from the walkway.

Interactive touchscreens and an incredible team of volunteer docents make exploring the habitat an immersive experience for visitors, who can get up close to the more than 90 birds that call the Tropical Rainforest home.

Funding for the Tropical Rainforest renovation was provided by the Colcom Foundation and the Allegheny Regional Asset District, and was sponsored by Allegheny Health Network, Peoples, Trib Total Media, and Vitro Architectural Glass.

Reviving the Search for the Elusive Ivory-billed Woodpecker

Perhaps the most legendary bird in North America, the Ivory-billed Woodpecker has been the subject of speculation for decades. The last generally accepted observation of the bird occurred in 1944, but reports of sightings persist. This elusive woodpecker, the largest in North America, has captured the imagination of nature lovers going back to John James Audubon.

Project Principalis, a collaboration between National Aviary Director of Conservation Dr. Steven C. Latta and veteran Ivorybill searcher and National Aviary Research Associate Mark A. Michaels, seeks to document these mysterious birds in order to preserve their habitat in Louisiana.

Cutting edge technologies, including GIS, remote monitoring, and environmental DNA may hold the key to finally documenting the continuing existence of this remarkable species.

To follow the search and support our conservation efforts, visit aviary.org/ivory-billed-woodpecker.

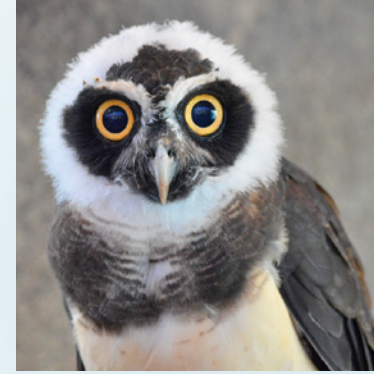


Hatchings & Happenings



Introducing Clover!

A DNA test revealed that our **Grey Crowned-crane** chick, hatched July 27 at the National Aviary, is female. Her name comes from her love of clover, which she would pick during walks in the Rose Garden last summer. As an Education Ambassador, Clover helps visitors learn about crane species and the conservation of wetland habitats.



Welcome to the flock, Duo!

duolingo

Our new female **Spectacled Owl** was named by Duolingo, the world's largest language-learning platform. Duo will play an important role as an Education Ambassador, helping students and visitors learn about owls and their habitats.



Turquoise Tanager

A **Turquoise Tanager** recently fledged and is thriving in the Tropical Rainforest.

Six new **Inca Terns** will be joining the flock in the Wetlands.

Two of the recently arrived females are returning to the National Aviary after spending time at other AZA Accredited Zoos as part of a Species Survival Plan®.



Inca Tern

The dynamic habitat of the Tropical Rainforest is now home to a new **Shama Thrush**, two **Golden-crested Mynas**, and one pair of **Fairy Bluebirds**.

Two **Grosbeak Starlings** now call the Wetlands home.

These birds will play an important role in their Species Survival Plan®, which is managed by the National Aviary's Supervisor of Animal Collections, Teri Grendzinski.

Two **Red Siskins**, which are part of an international cooperative breeding program, hatched in the National Aviary's Breeding Center. This species is new to the National Aviary and has bred quickly — an excellent sign that this critically endangered species may rebound in human care.

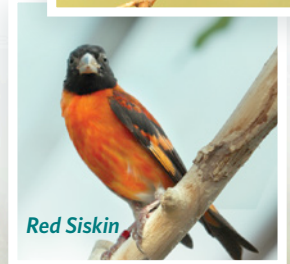
A **Victoria Crowned Pigeon** successfully fledged in the Tropical Rainforest! Visit this sweet family during their daily Royal Strolls through Canary's Call Presented by Dollar Bank.



Golden-crested Mynas



Grosbeak Starling



Red Siskin



Victoria Crowned Pigeons



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PITTSBURGH, PA

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Escape to the Islands!

See the cover to find out more.



Young Birders Take Flight

Birdwatching Hikes
April 18, April 25, May 2
8 - 10 am

This spring, kids can learn birding techniques from experts and have fun scanning the skies in Pittsburgh's parks. National Aviary Ornithologist Bob Mulvihill will lead young birders, ages 10 to 16, on three Saturday bird walks. Through one-on-one instruction, participants will learn how to adjust and use binoculars, spot and identify birds, and use citizen science tools like eBird, an online database maintained by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

A Day in the Life of an Avian Expert

**New job shadowing program
puts young people in the shoes
of aviculturists and veterinarians**
Saturdays, February 1, 8, 15, 29
1 - 3 pm

Aspiring veterinarians and zookeepers ages 14 to 18 can spend four days exploring careers working with animals under the guidance of the National Aviary's aviculturists and veterinarians. Join a guided tour and find out how our aviculturists and veterinarians care for more than 500 birds and their habitats. Learn veterinary techniques by performing a necropsy on a real specimen!

*To register or learn more about programs for budding birders,
contact Kate Campbell at 412-258-9439 or Education.Programs@aviary.org.*